



## the Broad Highway

valleys. . . . Mount Herbert and Quail Island were formed by a cycle of eruptions following a period of quiescence. . . . The peninsula was an island at a comparatively recent date."

The Port Hills-Akaroa Summit Road will, for all time, be connected with the name of Mr. H. G. Ell, who has laboured for more than 20 years to open up this glorious pathway over the peninsula, but his efforts have not stopped at the main work. . . . He has secured for the people of Canterbury many fine pieces of native bush, bush which, but for Mr. Ell's efforts, would by now have fallen under the axe. He has built four fine stone rest-houses at different points—the Sign of the Takahe, the Sign of the Kiwi, above Governor's Bay, the Sign of the Bellbird, and the Sign of the Packhorse on the windswept Kaituna Saddle.

These resthouses are artistic triumphs. The Sign of the Takahe, which is not yet fully completed, is a two story building with Gothic windows and archways. In a few months one of the rooms in this building will have a frieze worth thousands of pounds—heraldic shields belonging to old families of New Zealand on a specially-painted background.

It was to a little boy of eight astride a shaggy pony on one of the hilltops above Lyttelton Harbour that the Great Thought came—the Great Thought of saving the native bush, the glorious views, the sandy bays and the birds for future generations. But it was the man of mature years, the member of Parliament, who was able to put the Great Thought before the people and see it taken up and endorsed. One of Mr. Ell's first actions when he was sent to Parliament to represent Christchurch City in 1899 was to have the remainder of Kennedy's Bush set aside as a sanctuary for native birds, and the work of saving the hills has gone on ever since, until to-day roads and tracks, roadside houses and shelters, native bush and birds—all form part of the living monument to this man to whom one can give no higher praise than to say he has spent himself for his fellows.

In a hundred years the Sign of the Takahe will be mellow with age; in 200 it will be as sound as the day it was built . . . and the road that is the ultimate goal . . . a thoroughfare that will one day wind round the hilltops of the peninsula from Godley Lighthouse to Akaroa. Mr. Ell's eyes light up when he speaks of it. "Imagine," he says, "views of sea and plain, hilltop and glen, the great unbroken stretch of the Southern Alps away in the distance. Can you wonder that I am fighting for it, and will fight for it to the very end? There will not be a finer road in New Zealand."

"A MERRY HEART GOES ALL THE WAY."—Scenes at and near the youth hostels on the West Coast and Banks Peninsula: (1) A bush track near Mitchell's on the Coast; (2) Taupo River, between Kumara and Jackson's; (3) the youth hostel at Pigeon's Bay; (4) the Duvauchelle's Bay Hotel, which serves as a youth hostel; (5) open country near Hokitika; (6) a patch of bush at Port Levy.

There is scarcely a portion of Banks Peninsula which is not in some way connected with the early history of Canterbury, and the very names of the bays, the peaks and the hamlets have associations with the early settlers. For example, the Cashmere Hills, the portion of the peninsula with which Christchurch people are most concerned, took their name from the estate of the late Sir John Cracroft Wilson, who was knighted for his services during the Indian Mutiny. Kashmir was the name given by Sir John to his Canterbury estate, but the spelling was later changed to Cashmere. Godley Head was named after John Robert Godley, one of the founders of Canterbury, while Jollie's Bush was named after Mr. Edward Jollie, who was associated with Captain Thomas in laying out Christchurch and much of the land round North Canterbury. It was due to the late Mr. Jollie's enthusiasm that the people of Christchurch now possess that fine reserve, Hagley Park.

So much for Banks Peninsula. The Youth Hostel Association was not long in spreading its wings and taking a peep at the West Coast. With a splendid train service to Arthur's Pass the opening of hostels in the Southern Alps was discussed early this year and there are now several hostels at different points.

The Southern Alps gladden the hearts of both the mountaineer and the more modest tramping. On one hand are giddy peaks where ice picks and all the paraphernalia of strenuous mountaineering are necessary; on the other are rolling hills and mountain paths where the less adventurous may indulge in their own particular tramping fancies. And the hostels, of course, are of use to both classes, although the mountaineer may leave them far behind when he gets into the snow country.

The Youth Hostel scheme has now spread both north and south—the Tararua Tramping Club in Wellington made inquiries soon after the association was formed, and there are now several hostels in the Tararuas, while Auckland has established several in the Waitakeres. Marlborough has made inquiries, Dunedin is interested, Nelson recently published a story on the association's activities—in fact, the whole of New Zealand has shown a keen interest in a scheme that had its birth in Christchurch.